

Greensboro Echo

The Voice of Rural America

WCSHC Youth Group Making a Different *by Frank Taylor*



I recently over heard several individuals describing nowadays youth as lazy, pretentious, self-serving, and others unkind adjectives. Nevertheless, the Winston County Self Help Youth Group is conveying a different in rural Mississippi by managing Mother Earth's natural resources and producing fresh vegetables. Dorothy Harper Youth Director stated, "We are teaching tangible life's skills with

long-term implications of success. Our youth are learning good work ethics, developing oral communication skills, marketing, teamwork, and creating a safe community food system. A community food system is define in which food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular place. Our community food system is providing fresh vegetables for senior citizens, nursing homes and needy families to help stimulate good dietary habits. "We are facing an epidemic in Winston County with more than 40 percent of the population staring at obesity. We are challenging our youth members, community and civic leaders to develop & promote a health regiment of consuming fresh vegetables. Currently, we are selling daily from a half acre of rutabaga, turnips, mustard and collar greens. We have sold over 600 bundles of fresh greens over a six-week period to Individuals far away as Texas and Illinois. Yes, WCSHC Youth Group is a different maker in Louisville, Ms by managing Mother Earth's natural resources and learning sustainability skills".

JPS's Students Participates

Participating and attending Winston County Self Help Youth Group's Second Annual Youth Agriculture Conference on November 10, 2007 in Louisville, MS was a great learning experience for not only my students but also all the other students attending. We feel that it is a great stride in teaching and exposing our future generations about the importance of agriculture and sustaining agriculture practices. As for the students participating from Jackson Career Development Center's Agriculture Environmental Science & Technology Program, it was a great opportunity for them to share with someone else what they have been learning about in class and lab.

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"Saving Rural America"



WCSHC's 2008 Kick-Off Meeting *by Frank Taylor*

Winston County Self Help Cooperative's 2008 Kick-Off Meeting occurred on December 27, 2007 at the Louisville Coliseum with 32 eager members present and ready to assail into a new year of business activities. WCSHC's Mantra of Saving Rural America provided energy and enthusiasm for an adventurous 2007 according to co-op member Larry Miller; therefore, "We should exceed last year's expectations with perseverance".

The clock stroked 3:55pm and member assembled to receive words of encouragement from Leon Goss. Dorothy Harper reiterated previous minutes with adoption by membership. The kick-off meeting focused primarily in two areas, WCSHC's First Saving Rural America Conference and strategic activities for 2008. Dorothy Harper & Elder George Miller will facilitate February Meeting. Charles Hampton agreed to organize a housing workshop (March Meeting) and pass on ceremony for HPI's animals in April. Members approved the following issues: 2008's Christmas Gala December 6, Mattie Triplett-Cater & Robin Matthews-Chairperson.

Kurt Readus, NRCS' Area Conservationist updated members on going programs, such as, (SFI) Small Farmers' Initiative, (EQIP) Environmental Quality Incentive Program, (WRP) Wetland Reserve Program, and (CSP) Conservation Security Program. Readus stated, "Members should engage with (SWCD) Soil and Water Conservation District meetings to increase awareness of small farmers and youth needs". The meeting concluded with a flurry of activities, which included two individuals joining and members receiving Winston County Self Help Co-op's lime green sweatshirts with white letterings.



Scenes from the 2008 Kick-Off Meeting

WCSHC's 2007 Christmas Gala-by Staff

Winston County Self Help Cooperative's celebrated its Annual Christmas Gala and 19th business session on Saturday December 1, with an overflowing crowd in attendance, which included members, supporters and visitors. The co-op final business session focused primarily on preparing for WCSHC's Saving Rural America Conference schedule for January 5, 2008. Other issues discussed FSA's Livestock Compensation Program, 2008's strategic plan, North South Institute Conference and diversification funds. Members mutually agreed to convene on December 27, 3:55 at the Louisville Coliseum for WCSHC's 2008 Kick-off Meeting.

WCSHC Christmas Gala started with a celebratory prayer from Evangelist Essie Jackson. Charlissia Mays extended warm words of welcome and Dorothy Harper impassioned occasion-stimulated smiles. Mattie Haynes program guide provided a spiritual uplifting by reiterating the Gala's Theme of Planning for Tomorrow...Living for Today. Several members commented on WCSHC's achievements in 2007 and Victoria Collins, ardent supporter filled the auditorium with Christmas Carols. Dorothy Harper, members and youth awarded Frank Taylor with a plaque for his efforts to help save rural America. Elder George Miller blessed the meal with a fervent prayer of peace, hope, joy and good will for humankind. Mrs. Mattie Triplett served a succulent meal, which included dressing, yams, mustard & turnip

greens, salads, turkey, pork, bread pudding, cake, pies. "Co-op members declared Mrs. Mattie Triplett the best chef in the world". On the behalf of WCSHC Membership, we extend an invitation to participate in the co-op planned programs for 2008. We wish each family a happy holiday season.



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December 2007 Activities

December 1, documented cooperative member farm history.

December 1, held 19th business session.

December 1, held annual Christmas Gala-100 participants.

December 4, vaccinated pass on animals.

December 8, held Christmas gathering for special needs children.

December 8, held adult computer training class.

December 9, youth group delivered gifts and performed Christmas carols at local nursing home.

December 10-13, one member participated in NNFP's Board Meeting in Nelsonville, Ohio.

December 14, harvested and sold greens.

December 15, held adult computer training class.

December 18, harvested and sold greens.

December 27, co-op held 2008's kick-off meeting.

December 28-29, youth trip to Atlanta, Georgia. Visited Dr. Martin Luther King Center and other historic sites.